

are suited to each one's ability and circumstances, there would come to me sometimes a feeling of almost bitterness when I compare my spiritual poverty with the wealth of some of my brethren. I know it is wrong and I shall strive against it; it is wrong not only for me but it is wrong for you and for that reason I warn you against it. I would not have you to be satisfied my brother, with the attainment you have made in the divine life no matter how great you feel that attainment to be. It is not wrong for you to strive for greater gifts, for a fuller experience and a more perfect assurance. God's blessing is promised to those who hunger and thirst as you are hungering and thirsting, but learn uncomplainingly and thankfully to accept that which he bestows and do not question the wisdom or goodness of him who grants to one and withholds from another. He refuses none; he turns none away empty, but what the gift shall be, whether it be just such as that which your brother has received, must be left in a spirit of surrender and resignation to him.

While your brother walks with victorious step up to the high places of God with his brow bathed with the light and glory of the eternal world, with his heart filled with joy and music as with the voice of angels and his soul made warm and glad by the perpetual sunshine of God's unclouded love, do not murmur if God calls you to walk sometimes with eyes suffused and hot and hungry heart thro the shadowy valley with fears in the way. Do not murmur: only clasp his hand the more closely, prove your confidence by walking uncomplainingly where he bids you, tho you cannot see the way, and he will lead you out into the light by and by. If in the mystical body of Christ God has seen fit to make of you a foot or a hand, do not be envious of the members more highly favored than yourself. You can serve as acceptably as do the eyes or the tongue, and for your own peace of mind do not imagine that you are not a part of the body because you cannot see with your ears or hear with your hands. God has wisely made a difference, and there are diversities of gifts, but each gift has a purpose of its own and the gift is but an instrument which God has given you by the right use of which you may aid in the accomplishment of the high purposes of God and bring glory and honor, not to yourself, but to him who bestowed the gift. Do not be envious of another of his higher gifts; do not doubt the reality of gifts higher than your own, and if you are in possession of the best gifts do not scorn the foot because you are an eye. The diversity of spiritual gifts among men sometimes calls for the exercise of a great deal of charity. With your rich spiritual endow-

ment, your devout religious nature, your innate piety, you are apt to become harsh and unsparring in your denunciation of the faults and foibles of your weak and stumbling brethren. You would measure them by the standard of your own attainments, forgetting that what you are you are by the grace of God and if your brother lacks some of the graces which God bestowed upon you in such full measure, it is not for you to censure him for his lack but to show charity and long suffering and teach him. Perhaps in some of the humbler graces he may even excel you. Paul said if the foot shall say because I am not the hand I am not of the body, is it therefore not of the body? Suppose the tongue should say to the ear, because you are the ear and not the tongue as I am you are not of the body, is it therefore not of the body? Brethren, there is need for the exercise of charity. The humbler ones, those with one talent, the "little children" as John called them, may be members of the body too tho they may not measure up in all particulars to the full stature to which you have attained. Jesus was not blind to the faults of the twelve, but he bore patiently with them. They were unlike, one lacked that which another had, and none of them were perfect. Peter was bold and impetuous and head-strong, so unlike his Master. Philip had dim spiritual perceptions, and to him Jesus said, "Have I been so long time with you and yet hast thou not known me Philip?" The fault of Thomas was the weakness of his faith, but with them all the Master was kind and patient. Let us imitate him in that and be charitable. There is a tradition that a stranger one night came to the tent of Abraham, and on being admitted he asked that he might lodge there. Abraham asked him if he loved the Lord and he said, "I do not." Then Abraham drove him from his tent and refused to give him lodging. Then the Lord appeared and said, "Abraham, why hast thou sent the stranger forth into the desert?" And he said, "because he loved not thee, therefore I sent him forth." And the Lord said, "I have borne with him four score years, and couldst thou not bear with him one night?" The story is only a tradition but it teaches a useful lesson. If God has given you five talents you may well rejoice when you see these five rapidly growing in your hands into ten, but do not be impatient with your brother to whom the Lord gave but two talents when you see that his gain accumulates more slowly than your own, and bear yet awhile with him whose one talent lies buried and has given no increase. There are diversities of gifts, some greater others less, but he who has the least has still a great deal and all alike are under the most binding obligations to use their gifts for the glory of God

and for the good of others. You would have greater gifts my brother? More power with God and man? Then live up to the full measure of your present privileges. Make much of the talent entrusted to you. Use it not for your own glory but for his. Spend it unselfishly for humanity, and God will add to your store. The more one uses and spends and gives the more he has to use and give. A spiritual gift like the manna which came fresh every day to the Israelites, is lost by storing it away unused, but when used he adds more grace, he gives larger opportunities and fuller measures of the Spirit. After all we need not lament our poverty. He has given us all we can profitably use, every cup is full; and when we have enlarged our capacity by a proper use of what we have he gives more, yes he is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think. Another difference observable among Christians, and one which has caused many no small amount of distress, is a dissimilarity, within certain limits, in their religious experience.

It is important, I think, when we are trying to determine what constitutes a satisfactory Christian experience, to take into account the native, inborn differences in men, their unlikeness in mental and moral texture, their difference in temperament and spiritual quality as well as the diversity of the gifts of the Spirit. It is manifestly a mistake, and one too productive of much harm, to teach that conversion is always accompanied and witnessed by identically the same feelings in every individual. Many have been led to doubt the reality of their conversion because their feelings were neither so intense nor so rapturous as those experienced by some Christian friend or teacher. They had formed an idea, more or less definite, as to the exact emotions which would surge up in their hearts and kindle and thrill and fire their whole being at that supreme moment when they gave up the world and became the Lord's. They expected such a feeling and were disappointed. They expected it because others differently constituted from themselves had enjoyed it; and they regarded the possession of a similar experience as the best evidence obtainable of their own conversion.

It is to be much regretted that in many quarters a certain set of emotions, which are not expected to vary much in different individuals, have come to be regarded as the essential concomitant, the witness and proof of every conversion. Such emotions are experienced in some degree by all, but perhaps in the same degree by none, and often those who experience these feelings in the least degree are plunged into doubt and uncertainty at the very beginning of their Christian life. As pastors you have doubtless heard men say, "I fear I am not a Chris-